

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 2, 15 and 16 have been amended. Claims 1, 2 and 4-16 are pending and under consideration.

The Examiner objects to claims 1, 2, 4-14 and 16 under 37 CFR §1.75(a) and (d)(1). The claims have been amended to more distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. In view of the claim amendments, it is requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2 and 5-16 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over US Patent No. 6,577,753 to Ogawa in view of US Patent No. 6,502,984 to Ogura et al. Claim 4 is separately rejected as being obvious over Ogawa and two Ogura et al. references (US Patent No. 6,502,984 and 6,314,918). Independent claim 1, for example, recites a gradation conversion processing and frequency emphasis processing are performed differently for different imaging devices and different targets. As discussed below, the references, taken alone or in combination, do not suggest these features. Moreover, independent claims 1, 2 and 16 have been amended to recite:

“...wherein the image processing section perform gradation conversion processing based on a plurality of gradation processing parameters that are individually input by a user, each gradation processing parameter relating to how a different aspect of an original image is translated into a revised image.”

Independent claim 15 has been amended to contain similar, but somewhat different, language. Antecedent basis for the gradation processing parameter features added to the independent claims can be found at page 38, line 14 through page 39, line 12 of the specification, FIG. 11, page 50, line 27 through page 51, line 26 and FIG. 19 of the application, for example. The references do not disclose or suggest the gradation processing parameter features.

With regard to the gradation conversion processing and frequency emphasis processing being performed differently for different imaging devices and different targets, Ogawa is directed to tone conversion so that the tone of the image to be displayed becomes desirable corresponding to each of the imaging apparatuses. See column 4, lines 57-59. Ogura et al. '984 shows in FIG. 29 that the image process means 73 receives an output from an image process condition determining means 75, which is downstream from the position corresponding means 74 and the visible image photographing means. Despite these excerpts, the references do not suggest the invention.

Column 16, lines 42-59 of Ogura et al. '984 describe that a sensing region B of the radiographic image sensing means 71 is divided into an irradiated region B1 and a non-irradiated region B2, whereas a sensing region C of a CCD camera 78 is divided into an irradiation field region C1 and a non-irradiation field region C2. Column 16, lines 42-59 simply teach that B1 and B2 are made to correspond to C1 and C2, respectively, for the purpose of applying image processing only to image information corresponding to the region B1. This is different from the claimed features mentioned above.

Column 16, line 60 through column 7, line 8 of Ogura et al. '984 appear to vary image processing conditions based on different postures. It appears that the posture is used to determine the outline of the patient. This is more of a cropping feature than it is a gradation conversion processing and frequency emphasis processing feature.

Column 17, lines 9-27 of Ogura et al. describe that when image processing conditions are varied based on the photographing portion, the images are compared to a template that corresponds with a portion of the body. Then, the errors between the body image and the template are used to determine whether something is within the photographing portion. The processing performed here is similar to the processing mentioned above with regard to posture. That is, it appears the body portion is used to determine an outline on the x-ray, in which data is relevant. Again, this is different from the features claimed.

Because the cited references, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest gradation conversion processing and frequency emphasis processing being performed differently for different imaging devices and different targets, and because the references do not disclose or suggest gradation conversion processing based on gradation processing parameters that are individually input/changed, the claims patentably distinguish over the references. Accordingly, the prior art rejections should be withdrawn.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

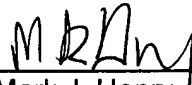
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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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